



Meet Your Job Service Staff

Lois Botsford arrived at the Job Service for a temporary three-month position and she's still here, 16 years later. Having spent 23 years working with her husband at his law firm she thought it was time to take a break and spend time at home. Little did she know that when she committed to those three months, that 16 years later she'd still be responsible for operating the switchboard and supporting the administrative function of the office.

As things have changed over the years, Lois has worked at the front desk, a space in the basement and now spends her days in a newly remodeled cubicle in the back of the office. Her days aren't quite the same as they were when her job included working at the front desk, answering the phone, processing payroll and providing administrative support. And it's also changed since her years of training other employees across the state in the Employment Assistant position. With the onset of new technology, she spends some of her time entering job seeker registration information into the database system. When asked how many registrations she's processed she jokingly says, "I think information on the whole town of Missoula has passed over my desk." She also added that she doesn't look at it as entering data but that each registration is a person. And working with people is her favorite part of the job.

Lois enjoys administering a variety of tests to job seekers, including the boiler test, apprenticeship tests and Caps, Cops, Copes. During that time she gets to work personally with people and uses her wisdom to encourage, motivate and provide them with options they might not have thought about in their career development. She's concerned about the number of young people who have no education beyond high school and would like to see more emphasis placed on helping them move forward to successful work.

Lois is still answering the phone and dealing with frustrated people and it's the piece of her job that she likes least. In order to remain positive and empathetic to those customers, she relies on good advice from her husband. Many years ago he told her, "There are no difficult customers, just 'people' in difficult situations." This advice has been an advantage to Lois and her phone customers, especially during this last difficult year for so many job seekers. Lois's empathy for others is also displayed by her seven year commitment to coordinate the state charitable giving campaign in the Missoula office.

Outside of the office Lois enjoys cooking, sewing, family time and playing bridge.